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Preview

Nadia Nerina (*Photo by: Mike Davis*)

The Long Goodbye

REVOLUTIONARIES have a sad habit of falling into desuetude. They have the Pyrric habit of upbeating interest in the very canons they drank fire to improve. The teaching of Christ was ignored. But the coming of Christ was the best publicity ever given to the teaching of Moses. In tearing down the flaws of Moses, Christ set up the highest principles of human conduct ever given man. But Moses and the Old Testament still won through in the end, assisted by the voyager Paul.

Diaghilev, Fokine and entourage came out of the north-east to give western Europe, and the world, ballet. Both had—in two senses—been fired by the caucausus of Russia's court ballet.

POTBOILER TRIMMINGS

The odd throwback which Diaghilev had to grasp to save his financial neck (although they did not even achieve this) was no indication of taste, merely a forced compromise. Like an early Picasso lithograph, it was no part of the masterplan—merely a potboiler with artistic trimmings.

In the way of potboilers—into the arms of the pretty one and as far from the ugly word think as possible—western ballet fastened its baby-fangs on the supposed gravy, leaving the meat as stuffing for the opium dream-pipes of doyen critics.

Diaghilev, who fled Russia to prove the Imperial Ballet precepts wrong, carried with him the stowaway seeds of reaction. The British, by whom only the aged (and lame dogs) are respected, paid lip service to Diaghilev and like flat-chested pharoahs went back to the tomb. The tomb, Imperial Russian Ballet, had the appeal of age, of convention, of inaccessibility. Like caviare these things are desired for their prestige rather than for their potential. And no race in the world so synonymises white beards with gold laurels than the British.

ENGLISH SERVED

The remnants of a decaying carcase were brought out of Russia to serve as the quickly-dispensable basis of the Diaghilev ballet. How amazing it must have been for Diaghilev that it was the carcase, not the catharsis, which appealed to the puzzling English.

But give the English this: the same carcase has served ever since. When it arrived it was rotten, today it is fossilized. The abattoir made by Diaghilev has become a museum. The odours remain.

The conventicle has, like Christ's sedition, been submerged. Today it is enough to worship—the lesson can go unread. Our

—To Page Six

BRINGING IMPRESSIVENESS BACK INTO BALLET

Ballet in Review
by
PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

SERGE LIFAR opened the Paris Opera Ballet's London season with Suite en Blanc (*Black and White*) which served as a coldblooded, highly-glazed introduction to the company. In simple black and white class-dress, without decor except for raised step-boxes, Yvette Chauvire, Michel Renault, Paulette Dynalix, Madeleine Lafon, Claude Bessy, Nina Vyroubova, Max Bozzoni, Youly Algaroff, Liane Dayde—and Lifar—were curtly introduced, made their bows, and the ballet ended.

A severe, closecut classical ballet, *Suite en Blanc* made an impressive if ungripping opening work. Unused to the rakeless Garden stage, Chauvire was not on her normal flawless form—a pity when so many are forced to judge her on a single performance such as this.

Claude Bessy

Ironically, she danced faultlessly in the ballet which followed—a dreary, dull "choreographic faery in one act and two scenes" as Lifar called it.

Les Mirages actually dates from only the year after *Suite en Blanc*, but it was not premiered until 1947. Renault dances a young man, Chauvire is his shadow. He is taken, like a guinea pig through a vivisectionist's bag o' tricks, through a series of events and meetings only to find himself with his only real companion, solitude.

I could, having seen the ballet, respect his choice.

Les Indes Galantes is a rigid, stately tableau from the opera. I found it a protracted bore. In Paris I believe they shower rose-petal perfume through the auditorium during the performance of this ballet. This is the first time I have heard of a floral anaesthetic, but I imagine it helps.

By the last ballet in the programme, having been bored by the preceding two and impressed but untouched by the opening work, I expected little of Balanchine's *Le Palais de Cristal*..

This is, in fact, his Symphony in C. But with a difference. The music, under young, harsh Robert Blot, was true to Bizet. The costumes of Fini fairly sparkled and shone against the unspeakably dowdy decor.

Different decor, same detours. This was Balanchine as ever—but given a spray of French laquer and a whiff of competitive spirit.

Micheline Bardin, Josette Clavier, Christian Vaussard and Madeleine Lafon—in that order—made the ballet and saved the night. Renault, Bozzoni, Algaroff and Lacotte had been on top form all evening, anyway.

CHOICE

The two central ballets, one a dabble in metaphysics by Lifar, the other a to-order creation by Landar, were badly chosen for a first night. How many more companies will kill themselves dead with the public by opening wrongly?

But, on the positive side, the evening did show the company as a strong one, the men excellent, the ballerinas sometimes very good. Decor, surprisingly for an opera ballet, thoroughly bad, was relieved by a costuming sense almost unfaltering.

Lifar proved himself a masterhand at choreographic working, if not in finished ballets. Several of his effects—such as his method of giving extra height to grand jetes by having the ballerina crouched below, were worth the noticing.

Variations, "a romantic divertissement" by Lifar to Schubert music is a recent work, first produced at the Opera last year. Six etoiles—Madeleine Lafon, Micheline Bardin, Yvette Chauvire, Christinae Vaussard, Liane Dayde and Nina Vyroubova—make this into a kind of Pas de Quatre plus two. I had the feeling throughout that it was the individual quality brought by each dancer, rather than any instruction accepted from the choreographer, which makes this a lovely example of dancing. It is not a ballet in any but a very loose sense.

Lifar followed this with his similar work for four men—Renault, Bozzoni, Algaroff and Raoul Bari. This last dancer is a small-built, compact dancer with a tremendous reserve of strength and a compatibility *en l'air* which, unexpected, dwarfed every thing else on stage. His perfectly clean, neatly timed finishing was a good answer to the critics who appear to think male dancers

Yvette Chauvire

come in lots of dully correct (large supply) and excitedly unpredictable (very seldom). Bari has great ease in elevation and a textbook-right control throughout.

He is unknown to me, but I will be surprised if the name Raoul Bari does not come to mean a great deal to ballet.

Yvette Chauvire enchanted me as Le Cygne to the Saint-Saens music. This overworked, sentimental, imitative dance to trivial music became a beautiful concept under the spell of Chauvire. Such work as this is what her reputation lies on—so securely.

Phedre, "a choreographic tragedy" by Cocteau, choreographed by Lifar to Auric music and quite atrociously dressed by Cocteau, has lasted four years in the repertoire. Whether Parisians have by now deciphered what to me was an unending, pretentiou sbore, I do not know. Why do the essentially dramatic Greek legends so muddle contemporary choreographers? The brow heightens, the symbolism—so naive—is dispensed with an air of risky experiment, the patterns become one dimensional.

UNRAVEL

I cannot unravel *Phedre*, I refuse to print the bafflingly character-saturated synopsis, and I admit a total failure to find anything worthwhile in this ballet.

The colouring—oranges, lemons dominating—was ugly.

Josette Clavier

The music another nail in the coffin-statement "The Auric Music" rather than "a new Auric score." The choreography inane and worthy of a temple dance in one of the current "ancient Egyptian" films.

Balletgoers who have not seen Rabovsky's Chief Warrior may well have enthused over Michel Renault's portrayal. Otherwise, no.

Renault has a better control than Rabovsky—a tighter, less elastic body without the fabulous "give" of Rabovsky but with a more polished finish. It was unfortunate that Renault's excellent characterization for a ballet dancer was seen so rapidly after Rabovsky's inbred genius had made of the role an unforgettable epic.

Lifar's *Entre Deux Rondes* was, in essence, a charming if not a strikingly novel idea. He had a Degas dancer, a statue of a bronzed Apollo, and had the two figures come to life in their museum after the nightwatch had passed.

As a minor Spectre, good. But the charm of the simple pas de deux was ruined by the "double helping" psychology which runs the gamut from more to more still with Lifar. Half a dozen corps had to enter, too.

TRIFLE

Cut half way through, *Entre Deux Ronde* would have been a welcome trifle. As it was it became an as-you-were display of how to pad choreographically.

Nina Vyroubova

Liane Dayde danced the Degas Dancer with childish wit, and one of those forlorn French faces, the interest in which started with Raymond Radiguet and became international via Leslie Caron. Renault, given pretty naive derivative choreography, did what he could with Apollo.

Nauteos was cut by thirty minutes or so for its London presentation. I must admit to having spent my time, whilst it was on stage, wondering just what had been cut. I could have deleted another twenty minutes or so of repetitions without losing a drop of worth.

Certainly Nauteos is the best decorated and costumed ballet in the repertoire shown. The girls are dressed in Wedgewood blues, greens and mauves, this used for overall tights embossed in white. Chauvire, in midnight blue nylon tights, had the least effective costume as the red embellishments were poor in sense.

It was good here to see a ballerina of Chauvire's position dance a frolicing, good humoured solo. The pas de duex which followed, to a saxophone solo accompaniment, was slow, thinly languorous. Not the oppressive overhang of the harem pas de deux, but a fresh, morning lovers' meeting.

Bari, as one of the two Tritons, again showed well. Renault again makes the best of choreography which hinders his technical capacity rather than showcases it.

Icare was a tragedy. The gallery laughed, the stalls groaned at the crudity of the inexpressibly dated percussion music. And Lifar as the first boy to fly . . . no. This ballet should never be performed again.

Next month: The Triumph of Micheline Bardin and the concluding reviews of this Paris Opera Ballet season in London. It is regretted that this issue does not allow for a complete review of every ballet presented.

VIOLETTA ELVIN
—not to mention
A PAVLOWA

TOUMANOVA AS ESMERALDA

IT WOULD be best to state that Esmeralda is not Tamara Toumanova's role, and so leave it. But the critic cannot get out of his occasional difficulties so easily. And, Toumanova being Toumanova, the reader is hardly likely to be satisfied by such a digest of opinion.

The previous dancers, both Krassovska and Kovach, had made a sympathetic if easily persuadable gypsy out of Esmeralda. Toumanova made of her a streetgirl—or so it seemed. This did not help the originally feeble and already over-fiddled plot. Then, too, she brought in various oddities of interpretation including a near-shimmy and a recurring throwing back of the head. All this, allied to a total slaughter of the variations introduced after the premiere, boomeranged the ballet.

The added fact that odd pieces had been cut, and odder pieces reintroduced (including the tasteless and thoroughly poor camel dance) did not help the ballet. The re-orchestration, much boosted, was hardly noticeable. The pace, twice, was so fast that I could excuse the dancers for halving it to suit their choreography.

But my disapointment was Toumanova. It is, perhaps unfairly, true that one can expect too much. Let that stand, then. I expected too much.

THE Odette/Odile of Violetta Elvin is excellent so far as it goes. Unfortunately, but deliberately, it goes too far. It is an over-oftenmade statement that ten well-turned fouettes are better than twenty hazardous ones. Violetta Elvin has not learned the wisdom of this. On September eight, when she returned to *Lac des Cygne* at Covent Garden, she trumped a dozen beautiful fouettes by kicking a further dozen which she knew were not good. The audience, surprisingly, did withold the usual applause-burst.

But why should Elvin so spoil what was a good performance ? True, the magic was not here. But a competent, confident-inside-one's-capabilities performance is better than sparks which dampen. We know how good Violetta can be, we can understand "off" nights. Even a Bernhardt (not, of course, to mention a Pavlowa) often had to merely mark.

WE KNOW

Elvin no longer needs to prove her stature. She can afford to leave out rather than pad in.

But if it was Elvin's off-night, it was worse for John Field. He touched the heights and just scraped off the bottom—both on the one evening. His elevation has improved, he was looking well on stage. But some rough finishing, and a spot of bad travelling, took the gloss off the performance.

Brian Shaw and Valerie Taylor with Pauline Clayden in the act one pas de trois provided one of the few highlights. Shaw was dancing more than well. Fine elevation and improved stature, and a good sense of balance throughout. Valerie Taylor impressed me very much.

In the pas de six Rosemary Lindsay bubbled exuberantly, effectively counterbalanced by some beautifully light dancing from Svetlana Beriosova. Beriosova has that quality which no amount of schooling incorporates into its graduating talent : even on the sidelines her beautiful work draws their eye.

WHY NOT ?

Why not employ two Spanish dancers for the "Spanish Dance" in the third act ? The choreography is banal, sickening. The dancers have no chance—given effeminate choreography to fit with quite strong music.

Badly played castanets never yet made a Spanish dance, no more than a title makes a ballerina.

If one is to explore these third act divertissements, what would not be cut ? The Czardas is anaemic, the Mazurka is poor, the Neapolitan Dance alone (Alexander Grant, Julia Farron) save the pace.

This is far from the *Lac* that Sadlers Wells can produce. Obviously the trouble is that one is apt to leave standard works alone so to achieve new results. De Valois, quite plainly, cannot have the time to supervise new productions, keep in contact with day-to-day management, and also upkeep the standard ballets in the repertoire.

Perhaps what is needed is a ballet nurse (ballet doctors have long been a necessity). Such ballets as *Lac* need constant watching and constant reworking.

That the patient can breathe is good enough. That, often, it can thrill is even better. Let no reader think this review is unfair to Violetta Elvin. The only reason I find her performance worth the trouble of criticizing—is that her normal performance makes rubbish of this opinion.

That I admit. And nothing could make me happier !

No Reason to Visit Aldgate

THERE is only one basic reason for a group of dancers working together, unpaid, to form a small company. That reason is to give themselves private scope, test out ideas, and generally experiment.

The City Ballet at Toynbee-hall achieves none of this. Both ballets presented in my presence on September 9 were no better than those of other miniature companies. The choreography was basic and totally conservative, conventional. The music for one was by Schumann, for the other Carlos Seixas.

Philippe Perottet choreographed As A Phantom to the Schumann score and concieved from Keats' *On death* ("Can death be sleep, when life is but a dream, and scenes of bliss pass as a phantom by ?"). Peter Darrall choreographed Celeste and Celestinha—a comic ballet played on the frustrations of a too-tall and a too-short girl.

This latter was quite funny. But neither of the two works possessed any sign of artistic expansion—or even of groping. I cannot find any valid reason for the balletgoer to descend upon Aldgate.

I would suggest, however, that the vegetating of an oasis in the middle of a barrowland desert is of little purpose unless one shows one's bright foliage to the winds. I am suggesting that word so distasteful to the cultists : publicity. City Ballet badly needs some elementary public relations in its dealings with its adopted city.

The Long Goodbye

—from Page Three—

theatres are filled by masses for the dead, benedictions for the deceased, with a revolutionary encased in the vacuum-grip of the monstrancs glass. A spark of genius? I forget the safety-match precautionism. A youthful spirit? Even a wake would be frowned upon. The fun has gone, the adventure disappeared, the excitement of art's chase after perfection has given way to the clocking-in clogs in an original conveyor-belting.

CREATE, PERFECT

I would excuse almost anything on stage if only to see the dancers appear as artists—glazed by the spontaneous, exciting urge to create and perfect. I long for fanatics, not polite clerks who have read a primpery Highway Code. I am being bored to distraction by automatons battened down like so many shrouded waifs in the theatrical coffin.

I hardly blame the dancers. I blame the higgins of ballet who have forced the standards of the decent drawing-room upon the theatre. They are still shaking Diaghilev's hand to establish connection. Still they have not realized that it was the man's soul and mind which made ballet; not his handshake which he reserved, like his throwbacks, for the patron and the patrons.

HEATON'S GISELLE

APART from a poor entrance (bad fouettes, rock-hard staccato arms) in the second act, I found little about which to complain in Anne Heaton's *Giselle* at Covent Garden on September 20. She was not quite youthful enough for the first act, but it has become obvious that Sadlers Wells are rearing hard-faced dancers who, contrary to more popular practice, endeavour to look five years older than they are.

Her second act was good. Rosemary Lindsay as Myrtha was powerful, confident. And John Field as Albrecht made a good appearance if his actual dancing was not up to standard. I think it is probably too early to judge Cynthia Mayan which, if true, means it was equally too early for her to be put on the stage.

YOUTH RIGHT

I have been damned many times for my attitude of "youth right even if wrong". Simply, this is not my standpoint at all. I do not, in fact, believe in giving the young a "chance". I do believe that any man or woman should be used only on the basis of his or her talent, totally irrespective of age.

On the same evening a quite hopeless Le Tricorne was staged. Gerd Larsen made a posturing, raw caricature of the Miller's Wife, David Blair worked badly.

Balanchine's Western Symphony

HOPE SHERIDAN

WRITES FROM NEW YORK

PREMIERES for this modern dance festival included Doris Humphrey's *Felipe el Loco* for the Limon Company; Jose Limon's *The Traitor*; Daniel Nagrin's *Spanish Dance*; Yuriko's *Four Windows*.

Other artists taking part in the festival were Charles Weidman's company doing *Flickers* and *The War Between Men and Women*; Pauline Konor, and guest artist, the German dancer, Margaret Dietz.

Of the four premieres, the most solidly constructed was Doris Humphrey's *Felipe el Loco* based on the story of the Spanish dancer Felix hired by Diaghilev to teach the Russian Ballet Spanish dancing. Felix eventually went mad and was sent into seclusion. Notes for the ballet do not mention the actual tale or mention names. The plot is simply based on the action involved. Felix, or Felipe, as he is called in the work, finds the ballet dancers completely incomprehensible to his art and himself to them. The resulting clash unbalances his mind. From the moment of his madness he sees only the imaginary Spanish dancer of his mind.

The plot to Humphrey's work is strong. The primary faults lie in the fact that a good Spanish dancer is needed for the title role instead of Jose Limon, although he is a powerful stage personality. Also real ballet dancers could have been substituted for the modern company and the choreography built up considerably. Costumes by Pauline Lawrence were fine. Pauline Koner as the imaginary Spanish dancer was excellent.

Jose Simon's work, *The Traitor* deals with the traditional story of the Last Supper and Judas' betrayal of Christ. Choreographically, the work is static and practically non-existent in the opening sequences. It comes to life only with the use, brilliantly, of a prop table cloth with which the Last Supper is suggested. The cloth, thence becomes the cape in which Jesus is wrapped as he is led away. The single scrim curtain archway designed by Paul Trautvetter is indeed, one of the finest backdrops I have seen in years. It appears as a series of arches almost three feet thick.

BALANCHINE WESTERN

While it is always delightful to have the New York City Ballet back with us, opening night could by no means be called a brilliant one. Highlights of the evening, however, was Tanaquil Leclercq in *The Cage*. Leclercq has certainly made this role her own. Her approach is that of a thinking dancer at work. Her conception is much more the insect, much more the novice, even in the love pas de deux the knowledge that this being is not human never leaves us. Hers is an angular, fresh, and driving performance.

Patricia Wilde danced opposite Francisco Moncion for her first performance of *The Duel*. While it was a highly commendable job, Miss Wilde must still have more time to make the role thoroughly her own.

Casting novelties of the week were Diana Adams in *Scotch Symphony* (opening night); Sept. 2—Tanaquil Leclercq in *Pas de Trois*; Sept. 4—Patricia Wilde in *Sylvia Pas de Deux*; Sept. 5—Patricia Wilde in *Firebird*.

Balanchine's *Western Symphony* was premiered on Sept. 7. The music for the ballet is by Hershy Kay, based on Western and folk tunes. Balanchine has choreographed a formal ballet which derives its flavor from that section of the country but which moves within the framework of the classic school. Incorporated into the music are such airs as *Red River Valley*, which is the unifying and underlying melody, and elements of fourteen other cowboy and folk tunes—some of which are *The Gal I Left Behind Me*, *Rye Whiskey*, *Goodbye My Lover*, *Golden Slippers*, *Candy Girl*, *Jim Along Josie*, and *New London*.

Western Symphony is in four movements: Allegro, danced by Diana Adams and Herbert Bliss; Adagio danced by Janet Reed and Nicholas Magallanes; Scherzo with Patricia Wilde and Andre Eglevsky; and Rondo with Tanaquil Leclercq and Jacques d'Amboise. All sections are supported by the corps de ballet. Unfortunately, the choice of some plaid shirts and blue jeans for certain boys and none for others, while the women performed in practice costumes was a poor one. Result: a jumbled picture. The first three movements of the symphony are nothing out of the ordinary, mild humor being attempted in the Adagio, however, with the opening of the Rondo the ballet becomes charming and real Americana. D'Amboise and Leclercq are the personification of the jubilant, ebullient young America, humour and all. They really take the Rondo for all it's worth—tongue-in-cheek, of course.

Strawinski's "Soldier's Tale" at Edinburgh

STRAWINSKI'S strange folk-tale, presented at Edinburgh during the last week of the Edinburgh Festival, represent an important landmark in the evolution of modern music, and is also of interest as one of the first examples of expressionist theatre in which the familiar conventions were defied and there was no attempt at the creation of a naturalistic illusion. (In many respects *A Soldier's Tale* resembles the type of drama familiar in the East, from India to Japan: there is a narrator, and the musicians sit on the stage in full view of the spectators).

Strawinski devised this piece (with script by his friend Ramuz) at a time when he was cut off in Switzerland during the first world war: he needed to earn money, and so worked out a short production for a small number of musicians and versatile artists which could be shown in any sort of hall. It needs seven instrumentalists, a conductor, two actors (the Narrator and the Soldier), a female dancer (the Princess) and one man who can both act and dance (the Devil).

The piece makes severe demands on the inventiveness and sense of style of the producer, choreographer, designer, and performers. Strawinski's music is dry, sardonic and deliberately ascetic in spite of its influences from street bands and jazz; it is a folk-tale presented by highly intelligent avant-garde composer, and demands in the artists a very complex blend of sophistication and peasant simplicity.

So long as he was speaking or miming Helpmann (as the Devil) stole the show. His high-pitched, somewhat metallic voice was admirably sinister, and each gesture was timed and executed with polish and conviction: without apparent effort he ran through the Devil's self-conscious repertoire of moods, being in turn smoothly persuasive, arrogantly dictatorial, excited, drunk and so on.

Here there was much the same blend of sophistication and naivete as in the music. But things were very different when he started to dance; for as a choreographer of dance-movements (as distinct from mime) he has never shown much inventiveness or sense of style, and the severe problems presented to him by Strawinski's music seemed to baffle him completely.

When the Devil made clawing movements with his hands, or flapped his cloak around the Soldier, he looked like any Devil in a provincial panto, and was poles removed from Strawinski. Helpmann's choreography for the Princess (danced by Moira Shearer) was on the whole more effective, but showed much the same defects: parts of it were so conventional they might have belonged to almost any show, while at those moments when Helpmann (taking inspiration from certain Jazz elements in the music) gave Moira Shearer typical "Blues" movements in her arms, the atmosphere created was quite wrong for Strawinski's folk-tale.

Moira Shearer looked ravishingly beautiful, but had no lines to speak, and was given little chance to build up her role.

The roles of the Soldier and the Narrator were admirably acted by Terence Longdon and Anthony Nicholls respectively. Both showed such sincerity and sense of style that the expressionist-Oriental conventions of the piece were made to seem normal and inevitable; the Narrator coped happily even with the rather tricky episode when the Narrator gets excited and intervenes in the action.

Gunther Rennert's production did full justice to the relatively prosaic passages, but his touch was much less assured when the piece "changed gear" and demanded more imaginative lighting, decor and grouping.

Though the production had certain major defects it must be remembered that it was being done for the first time in Great Britain in an "all-out" manner; and the piece itself has such charm that for the Edinburgh spectators the production's defects were far outweighed by its shining merits.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Edinburgh Festival authorities for recognizing the importance of this piece and realizing that it is ideal for a festival: it is little suited for commercial production because it lasts only an hour and makes very specialized demands on an artist, but it lends itself very well to 11 a.m. performances at a festival with artists appearing in other shows.

F.H.

BRIEFLY

Nicolas Orloff has been signed for a featured role in *On Your Toes*, the Vera Zorina-Bobby Van musical due to open October 11.

Valerie Bettis working on a new ballet for Ballet Theatre to be called one of two titles, either *If The Bough Breaks*, or *And Gaby Makes Three*. Music to be by Kenyon Hopkins.

Inge Sand of the Royal Danish Ballet did a last-minute stint at Jacob's Pillow, replacing Andre Eglevskuy.

David Tihmar, ex-of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo has just been signed to do a Broadway Show.

CARYL BRAHMS

On the Paris Ballet

OPERA", said Sir Thomas Beecham, the other day—he was speaking at a Harold Holt Celebrity Concert Luncheon —"Opera is singing".

If we were to borrow this optimistic theme and apply it to the Ballet—"Ballet is dancing"—what rave notices the Paris Opera Ballet would have reaped. For the Etoiles of the Theatre National de l'Opera de Paris with their two hundred and seventy five years of high tradition are the aristocrats of the dance. This breeding is apparent in their manner of not merely taking, but inheriting, their stage.

One sees it, also in their scrupulously polite attitude towards their public—a welcome as of a hostess to her guests, for the French dancer has never fallen out of love with the audience, but honours its side of an enduring affaire with bounty ; since to dance, for the French is to create an ambiance into which artist and audience are drawn, and meet. And this fine breeding enters, too, into the anatomy of their dance and is to be traced in their clear articulation of developpeé and arabesque, in the height and precision of their beats, in their lightness and in their elevation. And how much better does the ballerina and ballerino of the French school breathe than do their English counterparts.

Oddly enough, although breath control is of the first importance to a dancer, I have never yet been to a ballet class where breathing is taught in a manner comparable to the teaching of breath control to a singer.

And with what grace and importance does a dancer of the French school invest her port-de-bras.

CARYL BRAHMS

ADULT

The corps de ballet is less disciplined, more feminine, than that of the Wells. It has constant trouble with equilibre. But its movements are better articulated, and it is more elegant, with more pronounced personality —in short, it is more adult.

Mlle. Chauviré, the Fonteyn of France, who is the company's Ballerina Assoluta, is a noble dancer of an unusual range. Her dance, a little lacking in lightness and elevation, has become the instrument of her emotion. It is clear, a little over-deliberate by our own swift standards, but with an almost sculptural achievement. And she has a diamond bright pas-de-bourree, which is a joy to watch.

Mlle. Vyroubova is a dancer of distinction, falling short of greatness by a shade. In her work, artistry and technique meet—with technique slightly in the preponderance—so that her work is apt to be a little cold, almost impersonal. She has a fine carriage.

Mlle. Bardin has the warmth of personality that Vryoubova lacks. And a neat technique. Her port-de-bras is graceful. She has a lightness, a willingness to charm which is extremely feminine, allied, unexpectedly, to a touch of wit. An enchanting and accomplished soloiste.

BARI

As for the men, they are graceful, supple, strong, with excellent spins and with adequate (and in the case of Bari, notable) elevation, each movement flowing out of the last and into the next and executed with evident pleasure in the dance.

Mm. Renault and Algaroff are fine dancers. Both are supple and strong. Both can spin, beat, and jump. Both have personality. And M. Bari is born to be a Blue Bird. No dancer since Woizikowski has impressed me so much with pure ballon—not even Babillee—though the latter's dance is not solely dependent on the height of his jumps for its effect and he is an artist of a different, a more important, calibre.

But to state that ballet is dancing, and to leave the definition at that, is to over simplify an intricate fusion of the arts. For having pin-pointed one ingrediant there still remains the matter of what it is they are dancing, and also, of course, how they are dancing it.

In the case of the Paris Opera Ballet, they dance, for the most part, the choreography of Lifar. And as to the manner in which they dance it, the answer is, heriocally.

PRIDE

For in their London season they did not bring the classics, which are the pride and heritage of National Ballet, and which, in any case Mll. Chauvire is to be seen at her best.

Instead they brought a dozen ballets by Lifar, their artistic director, three by Harald Lander and the Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor by Lifar-Zvereff —Fokine.

Lifar's choreography, though inventive, is hard, verging on the acrobatic in pas-de-deux, when the ballerina is constantly and designedly pulled off-pointe in supported arabesque, by her partner.

I find it, too, unmusical, and often banal.

FOR DANCERS

A MONTHLY COLUMN BY

Violetta Elvin

who writes this month from Paris

AT what age should my child begin to learn dancing ?"—"Am I too old now to begin with ballet ?" These are two questions which are put to me very often.

It is the general custom in government institutions throughout the world to have students begin their serious training for ballet between the ages of eight and eleven.

In Moscow I was admitted to ballet school when I was eight and it was expected that I would complete my training to qualify for admission to the Bolshier Theatre nine years later.

There is, however, no reason why a talented child should not begin to take some simple dancing lessons before the age of eight.

These lessons could consist of elementary excercises at the *barre*, teaching the child the fundamentals of ballet positions, steps and movements. They could include the learning of simple *enchainements* which the child could perform to music. This would provide a groundwork for the gradually increasing technical demands which would be made upon the child in later years.

NO POINTE WORK

In no circumstances, however, would it be prudent to have a child do *pointe* work (to have it dance on its toes) until after the age of eight. Moreover, in special circumstances where possibly the child's feet prove to be too weak, *pointe* work might well be postponed until after reaching ten.

At any rate it would be advisable if children, who seriously take up classical dancing, would do no *pointe* work until after their first year of study.

WHEN IS IT TOO LATE ?

A much more difficult and controversial point is the question of when it would be too late to take up dancing seriously. We will not consider students here who merely take up ballet for their own amusement but only those who hope to make it their career.

I think one can generally say that one should not begin after reaching twelve. Only in rare circumstances, perhaps where a child has had considerable athletic training in earlier years, would it be possible to successfully train the body for the heavy demands of ballet after this age. But then there are exceptions.

Igor Youskevitch, certainly one of today's foremost dancers, never thought of ballet as a possible career or even of taking lessons until he was well into his teens.

The Most Remarkable Film—With Massine

by ERNEST BORNEMAN

Massine directs

Original Story and Direction: Ettore Giannini. Camere: Piero Portalupi. Choreography: Leonide Massine. Screenplay: Ettore Giannini, Giuseppe Marotta, Remigio Del Grosso. Art Director: Mario Chiari. Costumes: Maria De Matteis. Music: Raffaele Gervasio. Singers: Beniamino Gigli, Carlo Tagliabue, Clelia Matania, Giacomo Rondinella. Actors: Folco Lillu, Sophia Loren, Nadia Grey, Maria Fiore, Yvette Chauvrie, Dolores Palumbo, Albert Bonucci, Vittorio Caprioli. Dancers: Paolo Stoppa, Antonio, the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas, Rosita Segovia, Keita Fodeba's "Ballet Africain," Joan Garon's "French Production: Lux Film, Rome.

"*CAROSELLO NAPOLETANO* is in many ways the most remarkable musical film to be made anywhere the world over. It lasts well over two and a half hours ; it is shot superbly in Pantacolor, an Italian colour system that compares favourably with Agfacolor and measures up to Technicolor any day ; it employs some of the largest sets built in Italy for some time ; well over a thousand extras are sometimes seen in a single shot ; apart from its three ballet troupes, its hundreds of dancers and singers, its vast orchestra, it employs so many speciality acts that the film's credit titles alone run longer than a great many shorts.

The whole thing, in short, looks like an Italian attempt to outdo American musicals at their own game.

But—and this is where the film becomes truly remarkable—it has no story in the conventional sense of the word ; it employs the manner and technique of the most esoteric avant-garde tradition ; it is, in every possible sense of the word, a cinematic freak. And the most freakish aspect of it is the fact that it was ever made at all.

INGENIOUS

For here is a fascinating, ingenious, provocative film—but a film which is bound to remain almost wholly unintelligible to the vast majority of film goers. How in the world Ettore Giannini ever managed to convince the hardheaded businessmen of Lux Films to put up the money for what is, in effect, the most costly avant-garde film ever produced, must remain a secret between the producers and their tax advisers.

The idea is simple to the point of naivete—a history of Naples told through its songs and dances. But the execution is fantastically complex. Since there is no continuity of plot, all continuity is either optical or acoustical. Visual metaphors, sound similes, musical allusions abound. Choreographed movements are used to carry one action through time and space.

"I GIVE YOU"

Example : In a 17th century set (interior), a prince hands a deed to a merchant and receives a bag of gold in exchange. The movement is choreographed to the rhythm of a nursery rhyme with the words "I give you, you give me." The camera pans to right, catching the merchant handing the bag to another one and receiving something else in exchange. As the camera pans further to the right, it moves out of the interior into the open air, and from the 17th century to the present.

By the time the shot is over, we are in a plaza filled with what must be well over a thousand dancers, each of them handing commodities of one kind or another to his neighbour and receiving others in return. At the same time the sound swells up from that of a single voice in classically modulated Italian to a choir of a thousand voices with a hundred accents.

By then we have moved through history. Two world wars have been fought. The Germans have arrived and departed. The Americans have come. The juxtaposition is effected with an exchange of a machine gun for a coca cola bottle—"You give me, I give you . . . ."

This is Massine at his best. All the prosy mannerisms that struck us as vulgar on stage have found their poetry on the screen. What made bad ballet makes wonderful cinema. This isn't dancing, this is an allegory. And it's beautifully done, taking bits from *commedia dell arte*, bits from Neapolitan folk dances, bits from the damndest places and blending them all with an astounding degree of style.

GIANNINI

The crudities of *Red Shoes* and *Tales of Hoffmann* are forgotten, for the hand may be Massine's, but the mind is Giannini's. It was Giannini who first conceived the idea and it was Giannini who ran it as a stage show for years before Massine ever laid eyes on it. It was Giannini who borrowed deliberately from all the media in which he had previously attained success—the stage (he produced some of the best Pirandello, Shaw and O'Neill plays that modern Italy has seen), cinema (he became first known as an avant-gardist and obtained fame with the scenario of "*Processo all citta*") and radio (his broadcast play *Et un homme vainquit l'espace*," the dramatized life of Marconi, won international prizes for him two years running).

Inevitably, the film has suffered from the hesitation of the distributors, their fear of handling a film that fits into no known category. Will any British renter have the courage to distribute it ? Or do we have to wait for the Film Societies, the Cine Clubs to show it to us ? And shown it must be, for no other dance film, made in Hollywood or anywhere else, has come closer to pointing the lesson of cinematic choreography.

(We learn that this film will in fact, be shown as the first offering of the Italian Film Festival on October 25 in London.)

This is the definite film ballet—the polar opposite of a filmed stage ballet. And this in spite of all its minor weaknesses and incongruities. It's the idea that counts, the grand form, and no other film so far has come anywhere near solving those two major challenges with half the ingenuity of *Carosello Napoletano*."

— and Cinerama arrives in London

CINERAMA is one of those miracles which people come up against and sneer "just technical" at before passing on. Technical, yes—as the toe-shoe or bel canto were technical innovations. During October Cinerama was introduced to London, at the Casino Theatre.

Briefly, it is a doublesized CinemaScope idea, with three front projectors throwing three perfect-fitting images onto the huge screen. Stereophonic sound, of course, completes the effect.

IN THE PICTURE ?

THE line "you are in the picture" is no mere publicist's glib. You are in the picture. I sat in row G stalls and was swallowed up by this fabulous monster of a motion picture technique !

This first Cinerama programme, which has been running without changes, for two years in New York, is a mixed bag of here's-what-we-can-do effects, ballet, opera, tourist stuff and natural scenery exposition. None of it has ever been equalled—the vastness of Cinerama's scope makes a thrill out of winging over San Francisco Bay or seeing Utah for the first time.

AIDA BALLET

THE opera and ballet scenes, from Aida, were shot at La Scala, Milan. From no seat in the house could one have the view that Cinerama brings its spectators. You literally sit just in front of the stage—as if a sloped board had been built for your chair upwards from the orchestra pit.

A ballet in this process would be quite fantastically impressive—and revealing.

Meanwhile I urge you not to dismiss Cinerama as merely another Hollywood size-is-everything salesmanship spiel. Cinerama is one of the greatest advances in motion picture history.

Italian Tricone

GEORGE JACKSON writes from Salzburg

ON the banks of the Salzer and in the last lap of high Alp lies Salzburg, whose annual music festival, in honour of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, features at least little ballet. This year the Festival Authority had asked Margarete Wallmann, the well-known choreographer, to present four times a programme of three ballets.

Concurrent with the festival but not an official part of it, visitors to Salzburg could patronize two other dance performances. At the Landes Theatre the resident ballet company headed by Helga Weifert, Hertha Paulus and Francis Carter was seen in *Ratatuli, the Clown and the Dancer*, a ballet-pantomime in nine scenes by Erika von Schulthes, music by Wolfgang Zeller, choreography by Hanna Kammer. Somewhat off ballet's beaten track is the *Nutcracker* of Tchaikowski which Salzburgs' Marionettes have added to their well chosen repertoire.

Mme. Wallmann's works were performed at the Riding School by the corps of the Vienna State-Opera Ballet, four of its soloists and several guest dancers. *Salzburger Divertimento*, of course to music by Mozart, is a series of divertissements in a choreographic style as pretty as that made famous by the English master, Frederick Ashton, but lacking the wit which distinguishes Ashton's best ballets from the ordinary. However, this first item on the festival ballet programme serves in displaying the capabilities of unfamiliar performers.

From the first moments after the overture, the excellence of Vienna's corps de ballet is evident. Precise in movement yet lyric, obedient to the conductor's tempo yet never sacrificing plastic values and dramatic effect, these are the outstanding features of this ensemble. Of the State-Opera Ballet's soloists, Lisa Temple and Traude Brexner are, I am told, pure examples of Vienna's school of ballet.

ORIGINATED

Historically, this style of classical dancing originated in the stiff Italian toe technique of the early 19th century, but was soon made "gemutlich" by the softly swirling stresses of the Viennese waltz.

Frauleins Temple and Brexner seem as delicately romantic as the ladies of the Paris Opera Ballet but for the French dancer's habit of presenting herself directly to the audience, these Viennese ballerinas substitute an almost shy simplicity tinted by a slightly bemused smile.

Guest dancers were Walter Scherer, Boris Trailine, Victor Ferrari, Norman Thomson, Sabine Leblanc ; only the brilliant character dancer Scherer, and Trailine, seemed able to adapt themselves to the unassuming lightness of the Viennese style.

LYRIC

While in England and America the diverse theatre arts are going their exclusive ways, often not even sharing a common audience, on the European continent the idea of a lyric theatre is still attempted.

The ideal is that fusion of music and plastic, drama and dance advocated in the operas of Gluck, Weber, Wagner rather than the balance of these elements achieved in some of the ballets Diaghilev supervised.

La Danse des Morts, the second work on the Salzburg Festivals' ballet programme, was in the vein of such lyric theatre. The huge cast employed not only all the dancers, the full orchestra of the Mozarteum, but also the singing chorus of the Vienna State-Opera, vocal soloists Lisa Della Casa, Jean Madeira, Miro Brajnik, Otto Wiener, and actor Karl Bluhm. Highest praise for artistic achievement must, in my opinion, go to Paul Claudel's majestic verse.

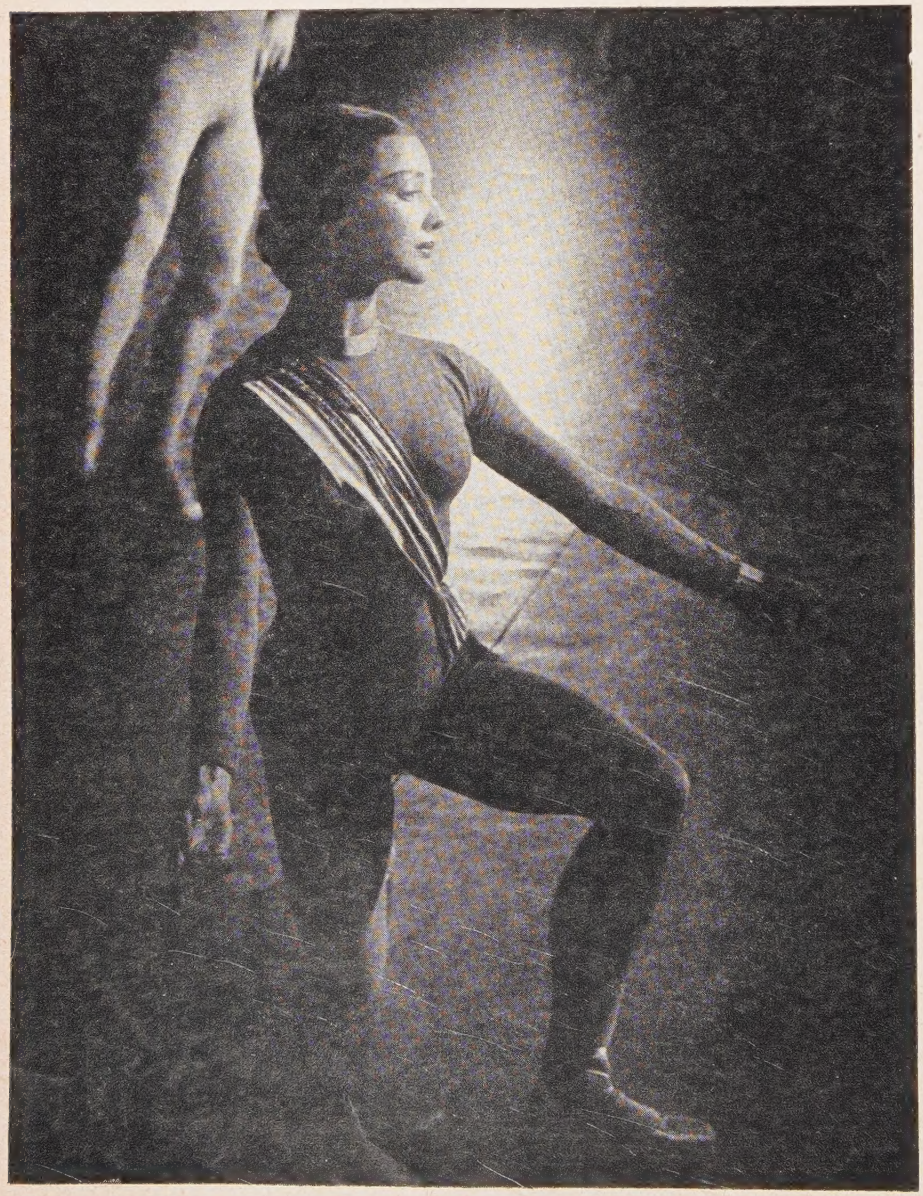
UNIQUE

Although leaning heavily on the phrasing of the Old Testament and the visual images of Holbein's paintings, Claudel created a unique poem which may possess the timeless strength of all great art. In a Europe still showing even the causes of recent war, it is a certain sign that contemporary theatre may surpass the much lauded goal of good entertainment by contributing to the hope that war can have its resolution, not only its consequences.

Under the strong baton of Ernest Marzendorfer, all performers rose above the occasional weaknesses in Honegger's music and Wallmann's choreography.

The final item on the programme, *La Giara*, was Mme. Wallmann's most successful piece of choreography. Less ambitious than *La Danse des Morts*, it nevertheless achieved its small effect with more consistent movements.

With music by Casella and based on a Luigi Pirandello tale, this Italian version of the *Three Cornered Hat* provided some fine passages for the now fully proven Vienna State-Opera's corps de ballet. Also, the long legs and studied charms of Sabine Leblanc, the French dancer, were seen to better advantage than in the evening's first ballet.



Marie Fris —a shot by Mike Davis of the dancer who is now in Germany, another study appears on page twenty-three

Belinda Wright

two appreciations

"a geode"

BELINDA WRIGHT is not so much a ballerina as she is the tinkling, treble bell which completes—but far from dominates—a carillon.

One of ballet's rare ingenue actresses, she has been gifted with a complementary style of dancing. Gifted, because no precedent could have led to her personal moulding of the style.

She is the opposite of the prima ballerina—her stage presence is not a sweeping one so much as a rushed, tremolo sharpness. She is a light, glisted, feather-weight dancer. If cold? A geode.

Anton Dolin promised that Belinda would become a Markova. He was right in suspecting her talent, seeing her as a nurturable geum. He was wrong in labelling the eventual flower before he had tended the earth.

I am as against groping for a comparison to this hoyden of a dancer as I am against recapping Karsavina to splithair Fonteyn's Firebird. If Belinda has lacked attention from the initiates who must work their eyes on a single channel she has been acclaimed by a public which, multi-channelled in appreciation, has been entertained by the young, easy enthusiasm she brings to whichever roles will stand the improvement.

If not a Markova, then, what omega to expect?

Being neither a clairvoyant nor a Dolin, I cannot say. She parades a bounty of sequins rather than the single jewel of our usual ballerinas. But she could lose her lustre more easily than her contemporaries. It depends on her own planning, and her own ideals. And it depends on her directors.

In using her, Dolin has taken on a distinct responsibility. There is that something about Belinda which makes one substitute—for the phrase "employing her"—the quaint truism of being her guardian

The ward is a responsibility. But the future can be rewarding out of all proportion to the care involved.

I hope the care is—in fact—involved.

Peter Craig-Raymond

Portrait by June Ryan

"a gamin"

BELINDA WRIGHT has had two inestimable advantages as a dancer : she was trained by Madame Rambert to become a leading soloist in her company, and she has also been a member of Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris. Madame Rambert taught her stage presence and developed her individual style ; while the influence of Roland Petit and the wit, originality and sophistication of his ballets, helped to form Belinda Wright into an artist of genuine personality.

She has not the reticence of so many English dancers : she is an *etoile* and takes the stage with the assurance of one about to prove it. Belinda Wright does not appear to consider it "bad form" to steal the limelight—after all that is what it's there for ! She appropriates scenes with the energy and delight of a kleptomaniac. She also appears to enjoy dancing, and is fully conscious of an audience which must be made to share her enjoyment. This is very refreshing and unusual among English dancers who so often present an aloof dignity and a bogus "grand manner" which, to say the least, is rather chilling in effect.

Belinda Wright's dancing is light, glittering and brittle ; it is designed on a small scale, projected with great *elan* and sophistication. Each movement is swift, precisely formed and sharply etched. While her dancing lacks the spaciousness and flow required from the true ballerina, it is crisp and elegant, neatly contrived and presented with an exact flourish. Her speed and lightness are outstanding, and remind one at times of the Markova of pre-war years as recorded in the film of Ashton's *Foyer de Danse*.

She is a "modern" dancer, ill at ease in classical works ; superficial perhaps, but full of natural exuberance and the most skilful powers of projection. In romantic ballets like Ashton's *Vision of Marguerite* she is not successful, but in light *soubrette* roles she has few equals. Her First Hand in *Le Beau Danube*, for example, is by far the most polished of the many recent attempts seen in London and consoles one for not having seen Baronova in the part ; while her Fleur-de-Lys in *Esmeralda* has a truly glittering elegance. Neo-

—To Page nineteen

May 1938, on the beach at Monte Carlo. Nicholas Beriozoff—but who is the child? See opposite page

Nicholas Beriozo

by Pigeon Cre

THE FORTUNES of war that made Nicholas Beriozoff a soldier at the age of fourteen, also made him a ballet dancer. The son of a Lithuanian schoolmaster, he was destined for an army career and had already commenced his training as a military cadet at St. Petersburg when the Revolution broke out. He was sent back with other cadets from the Baltic countries to his native city of Kaunas, but got no further than Riga : the country was in a chaotic state and travelling completely disorganised, so the fourteen year-old boy finding himself stranded joined the White Army which was formed there at that time. Eventually this army was disbanded and Beriozoff went with the rest of his regiment to Danzig. Here he was attached to the British Army, until Danzig became a free city, and the British departed. Through a friend of his father's, who was the ex-Russian consul there, Beriozoff obtained papers enabling him to travel to Prague and to resume, at the Lycee, his much-interrupted general education. At the same time he went to ballet classes and the Art School, where, under Professor Makovsky, he took courses in general art, and specialized in the history of the dance throughout the ages. Professor Makovsky was very pleased with his pupil, and suggested that he should go to Rutinia. in the Carpathians, during the summer vacation to collect specimens of embroidery, prints, church ornaments &c. for an exhibition of 'the life and art of Rutinia' which the professor was organising. Beriozoff found this work most interesting, and felt that his metier lay with the arts.

First Visit to London

SO WHEN it was discovered that he had an exceptional aptitude for dancing, and he received an offer to join the State Ballet in Prague, he was very pleased to accept it.

Before long, he was re-called to Lithuania for military service but when his ballet experience was discovered, this was reduced to six months, and he became a member of the Lithuanian State Ballet. Here he was soon promoted to soloist, and in addition undertook choreographic work for the ballet and opera, and various German operetta companies.

In 1935, with the Lithuanian State Ballet, he paid his first visit to London for a season at the Alhambra. Here he met Rene Blum who asked him to become a member of his ballet company. This had been formed by Blum to fill the gap caused by the death of Diaghilev, and included many of his dancers. For a while, it had been associated with de Basil until disagreement split it ; now Fokine was artistic director and choreographer. The headquarters of the company were at Monte Carlo and here Beriozoff was joined by his wife and small daughter, who were now to accompany him on all his travels.

For many years Beriozoff worked in close collaboration with Fokine, for whom he had a profound admiration, and whose lieutenant he became. When Fokine was away from the company, he gave Beriozoff complete charge of his ballets, relying on his exceptional memory for the preservation of all their details.

As Given to Him

WITH THE passing of the years, Fokine's ballets have, in various revivals, often become pale shadows of their creator's intentions—Diaghilev, himself, sometimes made alterations. It is Nicholas Beriozoff's pride that when he reproduces a Fokine ballet, it is exactly as given him by the master.

In 1937 Fokine created a ballet for Beriozoff called *Ygrushki—The Toys*, but this happy gesture was to have a most unfortunate consequence. Just before the opening of the season at the London Coliseum, Sir Oswald Stoll came to Monte Carlo to see the new production for his theatre. Fokine and Blum, accompanying Sir Oswald to the rehearsal room, asked Beriozoff to demonstrate one of his solos in the ballet. The role was particularly strenuous and dancing the vigorous Gopak-like steps without sufficient previous "warming-up", he suddenly found himself in great pain and unable to rise from a crouched position. Both knees had been so badly damaged that, after this, he was never able to develop his full powers as a dancer.

When the war came he toured America—now with Massine, who had taken over the company—and continued dancing his old roles as leading character dancer, besides new parts in Massine's ballets. This company scintillated with great names, and any night Markova might be seen in *Giselle*, Toumanova and Yousekevitch in *Black Swan*, Danilova in *Coppelia*, Massine in *Noblissima Visione* or Eglevsky in *Les Sylphides*.

A Family Affair

AFTER THE war he went to France to reproduce Fokine's ballets for the de Cuevas Company now forming at Vichy. This was quite a family affair for his daughter, Beriosova, was in the corps de ballet, wife was designing and making costu tutus for the ballerinas. As Madame his wife had supplied costumes for mo Russian companies and was an expert tutus—an art she had learnt from Fo gave her a set of rules that are traditiona

After touring France with the de Cue pany, they decided that, for the sake of education, it was time the family went America. But in Paris Beriozoff me Braunsweig, the impressario, who aske join the Metropolitan Ballet "for a few as maitre de ballet. As a result, they England and remained with this gi enterprising company for three years the Metropolitan Company came to an end, the family returned to America, grown so attached to their English that Svetlana gladly accepted an inv become a member of the Sadler's Wells Ballet ; while Nicholas Beriozoff, as brought his great knowledge and expe Festival Ballet.

The Best from each

BESIDES DANCING various roles, he reproduced for this com Fokine ballets of *Petrouchka*, *Les Scherezade*, and *Prince Igor*, and set the graphy for the full-length *La Esmeralda* Prologue of *The Nutcracker*. Fair-ha dierly, and youthful-looking, Nicholas has a deep sympathy and understan young people. Under his firm but be dance, discipline is maintained but e never dampened—each dancer, he belie be able to feel that the highest ranks are Beriozoff has studied with some of th teachers of ballet, but does not pr specific method or school, and "Ce Russian—I take the best from each,"

FESTIVAL BALLET is notable happy spirit that exists in its strength of its male dancers, as general atmosphere of enthusiasm and already its dancers possess that all- quality—style—without which no com aspire to greatness.

Who is the girl ? Svetlana Beriosova, the daughter of Nicholas. Below is Mike Davis portrait of the Sadlers Wells dancer. Svetlana Beriosova closed the Wells Covent Garden season on September 25 with a performance of Coppelia. *Dancing with Philip Chatfield as Franz, Beriosova disproved the critics who had admitted her flow, queried her fire. She danced with speed, zest, imagination. Radiant throughout, with only a splithair flaw to mar the picture, Svetlana amply kept the promise of her earlier performances of the season. Next season ? Unlike our first question, this one we cannot answer. But we can repeat : a ballet to frame Beriosova would not be much of a gamble. (Photo by courtesy of Modern Camera magazine.)*

BOTH Hollywood and Moscow have delayed long their possible filming of an Anna Pavlowa life. Perhaps her American tours, and her long absence from Russia, make Pavlowa a suspect topic in Russia. But in Hollywood, surely not. Almost every one of the bustlingly successful dance schools in the United States owes its original impetus to the advent of 'dear Anna' as all who never knew her, call her.

The inroads made in recent years by the Fred Astaire and Arthur Murray chains are as nothing compared to the thousands of independent schools formed upon the publicity of Pavlowa and the baby ballerina craze of the '20s and '30s.

Only the film of the Red Shoes has had any similar effect. Today 'Red Shoes Dancing Academy' signs can be found dotting main street from Fairfax, Va. to San Jose, Cal.

AND yet Pavlowa has not come —at least on her own—to Hollywood. Now she is to be incorporated; incorporated into a lifestory film on Vaslav Nijinski.

Not one, but two versions are a-planning. Moscow is to film the Nijinski life (wrecked by a western-influenced aristocrat, Diaghilev ?) with Georgie Farmanyantz as Nijinski. Farmanyantz, an incredibly dexterous demi-caractere dancer, was seen in London last year. In Hollywood, Istvan Rabovsky is to portray Nijinski. Rabovsky has been dancing recently in London since his escape from red Hungary.

April Olrich

Adviser on both—mysteriously when one thinks of visas and Ellis Island—Romola Nijinska, the wife of Vaslav.

GEORGE Stevens will direct in Hollywood and already there is talk of foreshortening Rabovsky's nose to meet the physical dimensions of Nijinski's.

Preferably, we must see both films together. What changes one can see rung between the two. The Moscow production will concentrate on the Mariinski days, though short, and the tragedy of leaving Mother Russia. The American will show Moulin Rouge Paris, the hissing at L'Apres midi d'un Faune, the American sans-Diaghilev tour, the madness, the great arena benefit in London which raised—not enough to build and upkeep a house—but about enough to thatch a doll's cottage.

Pavlowa will, undoubtably, appear in both. The Russian will be tragic the American—somehow—heroic in a soft way. Perhaps it will end with Romola Nijinska "carrying on where Vaslav left off . . . . . ."

1955 should see both versions complete. Whether the year sees the Nijinski life filmically complete—how tell ?

Too many scenarios have already been written. Faced by these, a hotchpotch of business from each is the logical achievement. And yet, the hotchpotches dispensed with, the Nijinski story might well make a great movie.

Aisle

A COMMENTARY ON

The Pocket-book Future of Ballet

THE Sadlers' Wells management position on the S.W. Theatre dispute was that dancers should be given salary increments on the basis of individual talent. This, it was alleged, works better than all-round increases.

At the top, of course, it does. Two women, both called ballerinas, might be worth far different fees. But, at the bottom or middle, individual talent is not such an easy guide. The whole corps de ballet, for example, should be paid an equal minimum.

Where the management is cleverly muddling the issue is in speaking of an "equal" salary—a vaguity not demanded by the dancers or by Equity. What was demanded is an "equal minimum' —a very greatly different thing.

INTENTION

In a letter to the Editor of the New Statesmen, one of the Wells Trust directors (Patricia Strauss) used the phrase "beginners (youngsters straight from school) . . . " with the obvious intention of giving the impression that the management were being liberally generous to untrained fledgelings. But she meant sixteen-year-olds, most of them in training from the age of nine. The phrase she used does not, in my opinion, fairly concede the point that the incoming dancer has already worked through and paid for some seven years of training!

A "junior reporter" is taken on in Fleet Street, he enters a national newspaper for the first time. But it is recognised that he has had good, previous training. A reporter's minimum in Fleet Street is now about seventeen pounds a week.

This shows the difference in stature between normal commercial firms (in the entertainment spheres, too) and the Wells management. Miss Strauss makes the point that the two-pounds-in-two-years rise is a minimum one —"it does not preclude a promising dancer from more rapid promotion."

But a dancer not worth a ten shilling rise is surely not worth her place in the company—when hundreds of talented dancers are vainly trying to get in?

The management cannot have it both ways.

IMPRESS

The point at issue is not, as Miss Strauss seeks to prove, that Equity wanted the dancers to be treated as "wage-earning units." The basic argument was that Equity had to impress on a comfortably-off management that no dancer can live in London on seven pounds a week.

My worry is not only that a dancer is being exploited by being paid a miserable salary. What is worse, I feel ,is that the whole system depends on the child having rich-enough parents to sponsor, not just its training, but its whole career!

It is tragically true today that ballet depends for its future dancers, not on talent, but upon the financial status of parents.

HARDLY

That a national company, state-subsidised, should further this abortive system is hardly praiseworthy.

I concede Miss Strauss one point. "As members of a permanent company," she says, "they are not in constant fear of unemployment."That is true. If it were not, hardly a dancer would be left in the company tomorrow. Even as it stands, the departure of dancers becomes more increased every season.

Starving is often preferable to frustration. It is certainly preferable to frustration allied to poor wages.

BALLET was, apparently, full of new names last month. **Violette Verdy** danced without notice in London, **Elaine Fifield** danced without a whisper of publicity at Covent Garden, **Militza Jovanovich** suddenly appeared as Odette with Festival Ballet in Manchester.

Jovanovich (pronounce it Ivanovitch) is a twenty-two-year-old Yugoslavian who came to London "on spec" and auditioned for Dr. Braunsweg. She was previously a member of the Belgrade National Ballet and danced in Edinburgh at the 1951 Festival. Militza is now, I'm told, a permanent member of the company.

I HAVE confirmation of **Vargas** and **Ximenez** leaving Pilar Lopez' company. Pilar is now in Madrid arranging new dancers and reforming the company. The new tour will take Pilar to the United States, Canada, Japan and the Pacific generally before she returns to Europe with a tour of Germany.

APRIL OLRICH, pictured here appears in **Laurier Lister's** new revue *Pay the Piper* which opened in London after a ten week provincial try-out. **April**, who left Sadler's Wells after the last season, dances and appears in several sketches.

ELAINE **Fifield** joined Sadler's Wells Ballet during the last week of the company's London season and has gone on tour with them. **Belinda Wright,** BALLET TO-

seat

THE BALLET MONTH

DAY'S cover dancer last month, joined de Cuevas as we went on the streets. She replaced **Rosella Hightower** who is expecting her baby. To readers who have enquired how we managed to have **Mary Munro** on the cover a day before Mary's last minute joining of Festival Ballet, and Belinda on the cover a week after her leaving for Paris . . . we could claim editorial clairvoyance. In truth, I'm afraid, it was mere coincidence jolted by happy choice.

AUDREY NICHOLLS, meanwhile, has added to her roles with Ballet Rambert by dancing Lola Montex alternately with **Anne Lascelles.** Audrey is also dancing the French ballerina in Gala Performance, the Bird in *Peter and the Wolf*, and the peasant pas de deux in act one of *Giselle*. **Margaret Hill** has rejoined the company to replace **Mary Munro** and is dancing Mary's role in *Winter Night*.

LORD WAKEHURST prepared the way for Sadler's Wells in Paris by lecturing on British Ballet with colour film accompaniment on September 27. The lecture was sponsored by the British Council who also despatched a compact exhibition to Italy preceding the Wells tour there.

THE Federation Internationale de Danse have organised a classical ballet contest in four grades to be staged in Paris. Any dancer interested should contact the Federation at 10 Avenue de la Grande Armee, Paris, 17.

PHYLLIS BEDELLS is spending some eight months as a guest teacher in Havana with the school run for Alicia Alonso there. During her stay in the Caribbean—she returns here next June—her own classes will be taken by a succession of other teachers including **Felicity Gray.**

And, from the Teatro Astral in Buenos Aires, I have a note from **Alicia** to tell me of her four month latin American tour. Ballet Alicia Alonso is headed by **Alicia** and by **Royes Fernandez, Carlotta Pereyra, Victor Alvarez, Dulce Wohner, Charles Dickson, Leane Plane and Ada Zanetti. Fernando Alonso** is, of course, artistic director.

Danny Kaye and Vera-Ellen in one of the production numbers from Paramount's "White Christmas."

Mary Munro, Anton Dolin, Marie Rambert on the night of Munro's Giselle. (*Photo: Mike Davis*

A SIDE-NOTE tells me that **Alonso**—in five days—danced two performances of *El Lago de los Cisnes* (can you guess what they called that at the Marrinski?), one performance of Coppelia, one of Giselle, and one of Casse, act two. Quite an endurance record!

NEW books include **Ivor Guest's** *The Romantic Ballet in England* (Phoenix, 25/-); **Arthur Frank's** *Twentieth Century Ballet* (Burke, 18/-); and, also from Burke, **Ursula Bloom's** *Book of Popular Hobbies* to which **Victor Silvester, Peter Craig-Raymond and Miss Bloom** herself contribute; and I hear that yet another of the major publishing houses has decided to enter the ballet field.

PARAMOUNT'S *White Christmas*, in the excellent new Vista Vision process (highly defined brilliant colour is one asset of the new process) opens in London this month. No dancer should miss the hilarious take-off by **Danny Kaye** on the **Martha Graham** type of dancer—**Danny** as Miss Graham, of course, surrounded by pony-tailed, practice-suited vultury girls. And the same kind of props! **Vera-Ellen** dances with **Kaye** in the other big production numbers and the cast also includes **Bing Crosby** and **Rosemary Clooney.**

PAUL GOUBE has joined the Cuevas ballet . . . **Belinda Wright** will dance La Sylphide and Golovine during her stay with Cuevas . . . such roles might make her stay permanently . . . Expanding after nearly two decades at Beckenham, the Royal Academy (under **Joyce Booth** and **Rona Uren**) has moved to Westwood Hill, Sydenham, where it occupies some two thousand feet of unpolished parquet floor—surely making it the largest ballet school in London? . . .

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Ludmilla Tcherina Forming Ballet

From Ferdinand Reyna in Paris

FROM Deauville we hear that the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas have just created a new ballet to Chopin's Concerto in E. Minor for Piano and Orchestra.

This is a ballet in which the music and dancing play a triumphant part, and in this work Bronislava Nijinska has indeed shown that her interpreters have caught the composer's most inmost thoughts.

The principal roles are danced by Marjorie Tallchief and Georges Skibine. A successful newcomer to this ballet is Genia Melikowa who was engaged by the Marquis himself. Jean-Michel Damase is a brilliant pianist with a rare touch. This ballet has proved an immense success.

The Paris Season for the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas opened at the Theatre Sarah Bernhardt on October 6th, and ends about mid-December.

Certain changes have been made and we find that in "*l'Ange Gris* Katherine Gorham has been replaced by Beatrice Consuelo, whilst Jacqueline Moreau has retaken the role that was danced by Rosella Hightower in the ballet *Scaramouche*.

With regard to Genia Melikowa already mentioned, she is a young dancer of twenty five years of age. Born in Marseille, of Russian parents, she trained under Madame Sedova. She has greatly impressed the public by her outstanding style and technique in the Chopin Concerto, the choreographer being Madame Nijinska.

WE HEAR that Ludmilla Tcherina will be forming her Ballet Company in Paris, and that she will be seeking the decors from Picasso, and other help from Carzou and Strawinski. She will interprete Serge Lifar's new choreographies and after presenting her Company for several week's run in a well known Theatre in Paris, the Troupe will then leave for abroad.

JEANMAIRE

FOLLOWING the assured success of the Sadler's Wells Ballet at the Opera in Paris, we shall expect to see *La Belle Helene* towards the end of the year. This ballet, by Louis Aubert and Manuel Rosenthal, to music by Offenbach, will star Renee Jeanmaire. There will also be a shortened version of Romeo and Juliet by Prokofiev, presented by Serge Lifar. Harald Lander will direct the choreography of a ballet danced to Bela Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra.

We also hope to see Darius Milhaud's *Vendanges* and Maurice Delannoy's *Noces Phantastiques* during the 1955 season. We must mention that the German dancer Peter Van Dijk will give a presentation at the Opera next month. This event will decide his future as a Dancer Star in the Paris Opera.

GLOROVA

LAST JULY at the Congres Mondial des Espoirs de la Danse, the Jury elected Lyne Glorova as a "premiere". She is a pupil of Mdlle Elvira Rhone who has her studio in Paris.

Manon Briane, young and attractive wife of Festival Ballet's Oleg Briansky, in one of the costumes she wears for her new cabaret act.

BALLET AT BERLIN FESTIVAL

THE new Berlin festival began on September 16th and fortunately presented again various ballet evenings in the big list of theatre events and so it seems that the main interest in the programme lies in the dance.

The company of the Marquis de Cuevas visited us for a short season at the Titania Palace and many will remember the fine impression they made in such works as *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* and *Concerto Barocco*, etc. The programme included performances of *Petrouchka*, *La Somnambule* and *Idylle*.

Rosella Hightower is expecting a baby and was replaced by Sonia Arova.

New productions by Tatjana Gsovsky are entitled *Pelleas and Melisande* by Max Baumann and *Der rote Mantel* by Luigi Nono for the company of the Staedtische Oper led by Gisela Deege, Gert Reinholm, Rainer Koechermann and Erwin Bredow and the *Bolero* (Ravel) with a fresh setting by Paul Strecker. Latter was a revived ballet and is already well known as a brilliant choreography.

Gustav Blank is due to open with choreographies for *Renard* by Strawinski and *Peter and the Wolf* by Prokofiev at the Staedtische Oper. His principal soloists are Suse Preisser, Fridel Herfurth, R. Koechermann and E. Bredow; these ballets are to be later in addition to the repertoire of the Operahouse.

Gert Reinholm, premier danseur of Gsovsky gets the opportunity to prove herself as a choreographer with the ballet-ballade *Bilderbogen aus Amerika* by Ernst Josef Aufricht and the Japanese dancer Joshio Aoyama and the pantomime groups of Jean Soubeyran and *Die Gaukler* have shown their arts during these weeks.

EVA BULOW

The Link To The Heritage

THE Romantic Ballet in England. By Ivor Guest. (Phoenix House, 25s.).

books

The English have always been enthusiastic patrons of the dance, and nowhere did the light of the Romantic Ballet shine more brightly than in this country. There was already an important tradition—fostered by a succession of famous French ballet masters from Le Picq to Noverre—when, in the span of eleven summers, that fabulous pleiad of ballerinas—Taglioni, Elssler, Grisi, and Grahn—burst upon London. So great was the impact of these fragile but spirited creatures, the male dancer suffered an almost total eclipse, and a visit by August Bournonville passed practically unnoticed.

Astonished and enraptured audiences flocked to see the novel new steps of the ballerinas, their use of the pointe, and to acclaim them in the romantic ballets by the great Jules Perrot, as well as in such divertissements as his famous *Pas de Quatre*.

The light of the foreign ballerinas blinded English audiences to the virtues of their own dancers and their chances of emerging from the corps de ballet were few. An exception was the gifted Clara Webster who, had it not been for her early and tragic death from burning, might have broken through the prejudice that existed for the foreign artist.

With the departure of Perrot, who was ballet master at Her Majesty's, the high noon of the Romantic Ballet began to fade; the great ballerinas danced their farewells, and there were none to take their place; before a dozen years had passed, it was all little more than a memory—another Golden Age was dawning, that of opera.

Ballet never died out in London: it moved from the opera house to the music hall. With this change there came a lowering of standards, and the sylphide fled before the muscular, high-kicking dancer.

The tradition thus was lost. Had it not been broken, we might have had a link—and a rich heritage of Perrot's ballets—similar to that possessed by the Danes.

A history of this fascinating period will be welcomed by all ballet-lovers, and Ivor Guest gives a scholarly and detailed account, often with contemporary descriptions of ballets and ballerinas.

The illustrations are unusually interesting as they include a number of drawings from the ballets, made for periodicals of the day.

P. C.

PART TWO

Digest History of Ballet

by JAY NORMAN

IN THE reign of Louis XV (1715-1774) dignity and graciousness gave way to affectation. Costumes were still cumbersome and in general followed the court fashion. Masks were not abolished until 1773.

The rise of the professional dancer and the development of technique encouraged livelier movements and attempts at elevation and prepared the way for the danseuse Marie Camargo, who made her debut in 1726. In order to have more freedom of movement for the 'entre-chat-quatre', 'jete' and 'pas-de-basque' she adopted a heelless shoe and a slightly shorter skirt. Other danseuses followed this lead. Early in the century French dancers began to appear abroad.

In addition to Camargo, noted for her brilliance, one of the most famous was Marie Salle, noted for her grace and feeling, who danced at Covent Garden in 1734. On that occasion she caused considerable excitement by appearing in a simple muslin 'Greek' style dress and with her hair loose. During the latter part of the period, danseuse Madeleina Guimarda dominated the scene. Danseurs included Gaetano Vestris (credited with the invention of the 'rond-de-jambe'), Dauberval and Auguste Vestris, who was premier danseur at the Paris Opera for 36 years.

The 'pirouette-a-la-seconde' was invented in 1766.

NOVERRE

Jean Georges Noverre, choreographer, inspired by the need for greater reforms, set out his theories in 'Letters on Dancing and Ballets' (1760).

His reforms were not always acceptable in his own country and he produced ballets in many European capitals. His ideas, which have had a profound influence on ballet ever since and which in many ways anticipated Fokine, included the reform of costume so that it should become more naturalistic and in better taste, the creation of dances to convey the plot or thesis of a ballet and not merely as divertissements, and the training of dancers to express character and emotion.

Although he does not appear to have been very successful in putting his ideas into practice—his own ballets generally consisting of traditional dances and tableaux linked by scenes of mime—as a result of his reforms ballet became an entertainment in its own right.

GREECE

The French revolution had a great effect on costume which began to be modelled on the tunics and gowns of ancient Greece and Rome, with distinct styles for danseur noble and demi-caractere and caractere dancers. The revealing of the human figure led to the introduction of tights. This, in turn, led to greater freedom of movement and choreographers made use of leaps, jumps and turns in the air.

By the end of the 18th century France was literally unrivalled in dancers and choreographers. In spite of Noverre's attempts at reform, however, ballets were still largely brilliant spectacles with more and more stress laid on technical prowess. Dauberval, pupil of Noverre, tried to follow his master's precepts and among other ballets produced *La Fille Mal Gardee*, a village comedy, created for a new and wider public. Salvatore Vigano, an Italian, did a great deal to carry Noverre's ideas into practice. His chief innovations were :—breaking up the uniformity of the corps de ballet, devising individual and group effects for the dancers and endeavouring to express his theme in dramatic movement to the rhythm of the music.

BLASIS

Although it had begun to be appreciated that a good 'turn out' was essential to a good execution, it was Carlo Blasis (1803-1878) who first set this down as a principle in his book : "A Theatrical, Practical and Elementary Treatise on the Art of Dancing". Blasis also invented the 'attitude', based on the statue of Mercury by Jean Bologne. He became director of the Imperial Academy of Dancing at La Scala, Milan, and trained many outstanding dancers.

After 1821, ballet became very popular in England, partly owing to further visits by French dancers and three theatres, including Covent Garden, regularly put on performances of ballet.

discs

WE return to Spain this month but there is a difference in this record, Capitol CTL 7054, played by the gifted Spanish pianist, Leonard Pennario, which I enjoyed immensely. Apart from his amazingly clear cut virtuosity, it is his directness of attack combined with his sensitive approach that brings a new beauty to such well known—sometimes too well known—pieces as Albeniz's Tango and Granados' Playera. Nearly every work has been used by one or other of the Spanish companies that have been here in recent times. The slight hardness of the recorded tone, I found was an asset rather than a liability.

THE music for Nijinska's Brahm's Variations is given complete on Capitol CTL 7049 by the pianist, Sasch Gorodnitzki—that is to say Variations on a Theme of Paganini Op. 35, as well as those on Handel's, Op. 24. Nijinska's choreography was good but the ballet proved too lengthy. The Handel variations are most attractive and beautifully played, while the playing of the Paganini though not to the same standard, is never-the-less good. I do not feel that the brilliant type of American recording is an advantage. Nor does Rachmaninov fare any better on the recording side of a Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Decca LXT 2862. Julius Katchen, piano, Sir Adrian Boult and the LPO fail to capture the romanticism, so superbly portrayed by Baronova and Riabouchinska in Fokine's Paganini. On the other side, Dohnanyi's Variations on a Nursery Theme—William Dollar's Five Gifts for the de Cuevas Ballet and also Mia Slavenska's Portrait of a Ballerina—is an all round improvement, receiving a sound workmanlike performance and satisfactory recording.

SLAVENSKA and Franklin choreographed Concerto Romantico to Liszt's First Piano Concerto—a difficult type of ballet to bring off successfully. It calls for virtuosity and stamina from the whole company, as does the score from the concert pianist. This record of Telefunken, LGX 66022, is excellent. Poldi Mildner with the Rias Symphony Orchestra (Rother), is brilliant—not merely technically as she also plays with great sensitivity and style. This is undoubtedly the best record of this work, which you will not regret buying as the reverse, Weber's Konzertstuck, is also extremely good.

B. C.

Who Took Over From Vaganova?

By YURI SLONIMSKI
Author of "Masters of the Ballet" and "Soviet Ballet"

BALLET enthusiasts will know and appreciate the dancers Alla Shelest, Galina Kirillova, Inna Izraileva-Zubkovskaya, Nonna Yastrebov Zukbovskaya, Nonna Yastrebova (Kirov Theatre), and Svetlana Sheina and Vera Stankevich (Maly Opera Theatre). They have all danced at international festivals.

One of the leading ballerinas of the young generation, a post-war graduate of the Leningrad school is Olga Moiseyeva. She is at her best as Nikia in the *Bayadere*, an old ballet by Petipas and Mincus, and as the bird Maiden in Yarullin's ballet *Shurale*. Moiseyeva has successfully danced the part of Odette and Odylle (Swan Lake) at guest performances at the State Bolshoi Theatre and Moscow Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theatre. Her deeply expressive movements and dramatisation are striking.

DIFFERENT

Ninel Kurgapkina is an artist of a different temperament. What appeals most in her dancing in *The Flames of Paris* and other ballets is her brilliant dancing technique.

However, Moiseyeva, Kurgapkina and other talented dancers such as Ninel Petrova and Lubov Voishnis, are not the youngest representatives of the Soviet ballet. Some of the most recent graduates of the celebrated Leningrad school have already gained recognition. The training of ballerinas was not interrupted by the untimely death of the outstanding ballet teacher Vaganova. Many talented dancers have been trained by her colleagues, Balabina, Iordan, Kamkova and Shiripina.

Osipenko, Korneyeva, Kolpakova, Timofeyeva, Smirnova, Mokova, Timofeyeva, Smirnova, Morkovina and Minchenok are just a few of the representatives of the youngest dancers. Olga Zabotkina and Tatyana Legat, who for a number of years have been dancing the parts of Clara in *Casse Noisette*, Cupid in *Don quixote* and other children's roles, are well known to audiences in Leningrad. Incidentally, Tatyana Legat belongs to the fifth generation of a family of theatre artists. Her ancestors were associated with the Russian theatre in the days of Pushkin and Glinka.

SCOPE

The rich repertory of old and modern ballets has ample scope for all the different genres of the dance. This is especially evident in a ballet like *Sleeping Beauty*.

Audiences were captivated by the plasticity and rhythmic movements of Alla Osipenko as the Lilac Fairy in *Sleeping Beauty*. Her graceful figure has a quality of soft, gentle lyricism.

In Irina Kolpakova the Leningrad ballet has acquired a fine classical dancer ; purity, precision and polish of movement are combined with excellent acting ability. These qualities stood out to the greatest advantage in her performance in *Casse Noisette*.

Nina Timofeyeva is a very promising dancer in the heroic genre hitherto represented mainly by Alla Shelest.

Progress in training male dancers has not been quite up to requirements for some years. In the 'twenties, the Leningrad school trained a whole galaxy of dancers who won world renown, including Alexei Yermolayev, Vakhtang Chabukiani, Konstantin Sergeyev, Semeon Kaplan and Nikolai Zubkovsky. That period was followed by a lull, and only in the postwar years has greater progress been made. The outstanding ballet teacher Vladimir Ponomarev trained a large group of promising dancers in the last years of his life. Of them Boris Bregvadze, Igor Belsky and Askold Makarov (Kirov Theatre) Victor Tulubyev and Nikolai Morozov (Maly Opera Theatre) have become leading dancers

SUCCESS

A new group of male dancers appeared in 1951-53 : Svyatoslav Kuznetsov and Vladlen Semenov (Kirov Theatre), Venyamin Zimin and Adol Khamzin (Malv Opera Theatre).

In three years, Kuznetsov has made a success as Yevgeni in *The Bronze Horseman*, as Ma Licheng in the *Red Poppy*, Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake* and Ali-Batyr in *Shurale*. He has gained distinction at international reviews, danced at guest performances at the Bolshoi Theatre and the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theatre in Moscow, and has also made his debut on the screen in the three-dimentional film *Aleko* (Rachmaninov's opera). His dramatic talent, presence and technique stand out to advantage also in the character dance.

Semenov's dancing is distinguished by austere classical movements and lyricism. He will unquestionably shine in the classical repertory, as is indicated in particular by his success as Bluebird and the Prince (*Sleeping Beauty*).

Zimin and Khamzin play the parts of Shah Bakhram and Menzer the warrior in the *Seven Beauties*. These parts demand a deep insight into character and the young actors are quite up to this requirement. This is particularly true of Zimin as Shah Bakhram. A well trained and strong classical dancer, Zimin is equally good in the character dance. This quality is typical of the entire young generation of dancers.

APPLAUSE

Khamzin (who made his debut on the stage only six months ago) was rewarded with enthusiastic applause at the Fourth World Youth Festival where he partnered Nina Timofeyeva. The critics noted his dynamic, virile and spirited performance in the classical dance. These qualities account for Khamzin's success as Menzer in the *Seven Beauties*.

It is as yet too early to make any forecasts with regard to the future of any of the male dancers and ballerinas mentioned here. One thing, however, is certain. The young artists are rapidly developing their talent and winning the public favour. They receive all the necessary attention, assistance and encouragement. Teachers assist them in their work on every new role. Special competitions held every year in all the theatres help to discover new talent. The best young dancers are given leading parts.

The prospects of an artist depend to a large extent upon the widening repertory of the ballet. The year 1954 has brought many new productions to the Leningrad ballet stage. The Kirov Theatre is reviving *Casse Noisette* in a new production (with Vassili Vainonen as ballet master and Soliko Virsaladze as stage designer). Among the coming productions is Aram Khachatyryan's ballet *Spartacus* (scenario writer Nikolai Volkov). The music of this ballet was heard recently at a preview concert. Work on this production began this spring (with Igor Moiseyev as ballet master and Soliko Virsaladze as stage designer).

FOLKLORE

The ballet *Twelve Months* will be produced by the Maly Opera Theatre. It is based on the play for children by the well known Soviet writer Samuel Marshak, which was inspired by Czeck folk lore. Boris Fenster is in charge of this production, while Tatyana Bruni is the stage designer. Boris Bitov will make his debut here as a ballet composer.

Lastly, the Kirov Theatre is planning a preview concert in the near future to hear the music composed by Kara Karayev for the first act of the ballet *Path of Thunder*, inspired by the South African writer Peter Abrahams' novel (the scenario writer is Slonimsky, and Sergeyev is the ballet master).

Spartacus (the music and the ballet) will undoubtedly be an important contribution to the Soviet ballet. Aram Khachaturyan's genius has imbued the music with such fiery passion and power that even its interpretation on the piano is deeply stirring. The public is looking forward with great interest to the premiere of this ballet ; in Askold Makarov they see a dancer "born for the part of Spartacus", "the great citizen of antiquity."

diary

Sadler's Wells Ballet
Nov. 15: *Oxford New*
22: *Bristol Hippodrome*
29: *Manchester Palace*
Dec. 13: *Winter season at Covent Garden commences.*

Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet
Nov. 1: *Hanley Royal*
8: *B'ham Alexandra*
18: *London season at S.W. Theatre commences with the premiere of Cafe des Sports, Lady and the Fool, Carnaval.*
19: *Same programme*
20: (mat) *Sylphides, Lady and the Fool, Cafe des Sports*
25: *Sylphides, Blood Wedding, Pineapple Poll*
27: (mat) *Carnaval, Poll, Cafe*
Dec. 1: *Lady and the Fool, Harlequin in April, Cafe*
4: (mat) *Sylphides, Harlequin, Carte Blanche*
7: *Carnaval, Blood Wedding, Lady and the fool*
10: *Sylphides, Harlequin, Cafe*
11: (mat) *Cafe, Carte Blanche, Poll*
15: *Carnaval, Blood Wedding, Carte Blanche*
22: *Selina (revival; 1st perf.), Harlequin in April, Poll.*

Alicia Markova
Dec. 27: *Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin will star in this year's "Where The Rainbow Ends" at Festival-hall. Harald Lander has choreographed a new ballet insert for Markova.*

Ballet Rambert
Oct. 20: (four weeks) *Sharing the Stoll Theatre as curtain-raiser to Joan of Arc at the Stake. In one act of Giselle.*

Diaghilev Exhibition
Richard Buckle's exhibition of Diaghilevia, arranged for the Edinburgh Festival, will be on show at Forbes House, Halkin Street, W. as from Oct. 27.

Neapolitan Fantasy
The film "Neapolitan Fantasy" (previously entitled "Carosello Neapoletano," etc.) leads off the Italian Film Festival at the Tivoli Cinema, Strand, on October 25. The whole film is balletic in trend and features Chauvire, Cuevas ballet, Antonio, an African company, and dance direction by Massine. See review on another page.

IN BALLET TODAY

—PART SEVEN—

S

Yurek Shabalevski. Polish dancer who studied in the Polish capital school and worked first with Rubinstein and Nijinska before joining de Basil's Ballet Russe in 1933. Since then, and in the pre-war years, danced as a guest star with various companies and with his own groups. After the war was with Ballet for America and various groups.

Uday Shankar. Indian (Hindu) dancer who was invited by Pavlova, who had an interest in Indian dancing, to dance with her company and choreograph a dance for her. Afterwards he formed his own company and, with several changes, this company has been revived for a number of tours, the last one of which brought Shankar to London a few years ago.

Ted Shawn. American modern dancer and choreographer, author of an apologia for modern dance and one of the most active M.D. organisers in the United States. He has a great many dance works to his credit and is still active.

Moira Shearer. British dancer who graduated from the International Ballet to Sadler's Wells in 1944. In 1948 she began the change-period which was sparked by her success in Powell and Pressburger's film *The Red Shoes* and has culminated in her decision to retire from ballet.

(Next month: The Moira Shearer Story in Ballet Today).

George Skibine. Russian dancer born near Leo Tolstoi's birth place, Yasnaya Polyana in 1920. He first worked with Diaghilev in Paris, later joined Blum, Basil, and after the 1939-45 war, the Markova-Dolin Ballet. From this group he went to the 1946 Original Ballet Russe and later to the Marquis de Cuevas Ballet. He is today one of the leading dancers of the Cuevas company. (Married to Marjorie Tallchief, also of the Cuevas Ballet).

Irene Skorik. French dancer who graduated from the Opera to Ballets des Champs-Elysees, the Monte Carlo Ballet and, most recently, Kirsta's short-lived Ballet Comique.

Vladimir Skouratov. Russian dancer who has worked with the Petit company, with de Basil and with the 1947 Monte Carlo Ballet. He has since then become principal dancer of the de Cuevas Ballet with which company he recently returned to London.

Michael Somes. English dancer who came out of the Sadler's Wells School and went straight into the then Vic-Wells Ballet. He returned to the Sadler's Wells company after the war and became principal male dancer, the position he holds today. He is Margot Fonteyn's partner in the major ballets of the repertoire, and he recently added the Prince in Firebird to his roles.

Nina Stroganova. Danish dancer, danced with a great number of companies before the war including the 1938 Russe, Ballet Theatre, etc. Joined the 1942 Original Ballet Russe as ballerina in 1942 and again appeared with Kirsta's reformed Ballet Russe at Festival Hall before the company faded away.

Marina Svetlova. French dancer who has worked with the Ballet Theatre, Ballet Russe and at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. Makes solo and group tours, most recently with Dolin and Gilpin. She also appeared two years ago with Festival Ballet in London as guest artist.

BELINDA WRIGHT—*from page eleven*

classicism I suppose one would call it—as though one cared, after such a spectacular piece of dancing!

Belinda Wright is remarkably pretty—reminding one at times of Renee Jeanmaire ; she is daintily built, with large eyes and the same stylish impudence. But *gamin* is a term difficult to translate, and sometimes one feels that it has been difficult to translate Belinda Wright from the sophisticated world of modern French ballet to the less exhilarating atmosphere of the Festival Hall.

The Festival Ballet has many admirable features, but sophistication is not one of them.

Belinda Wright suggests that she would be more at home dancing to the mocking elegance of Ibert's music against a *decor* by Clave, than as a demure Alice in Wonderland ; more at home in the Marigny Theatre in Paris than at the Festival Hall.

This is unusual for an English dancer ; and we must be grateful to Belinda Wright for bringing to the stage the atmosphere of a brighter and more exhilarating world.

RICHARD AUSTIN

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Marie Tallchief is to Lead Denham's New Ballet Russe

ON OCTOBER 1st the revived "Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo' opened its trans-continental American tour in Baltimore. Under the direction of Sergei J. Denham, the company is headed by ballerina Maria Tallchief. Leading soloists include Nina Novak, Yvonne Chouteau, Gertrude Yyven and Irina Borovska.

Great things are prophesied of Irina Borovska by Sergei Denham, and Massine is said to have found in her a coming ballerina of international status.

The male contingent is headed by Frederic Franklin, who is also the Maitre de Ballet, and with him are Leon Danielian, Alan Howard and Victor Moreno.

MASSINE CALL

Two new productions have been subsidized by Ballet Foundation. The first is Massine's *Harold in Italy* to the music of Berlioz. Massine was called on the phone in Italy by Denham and within six days was at rehearsal in New York. The second is a ballet version of *The Mikado* which has been choreographed by Antonia Cobos. Scenery and costumes for both these ballets are by Bernard Lamotte, and costumes are being executed by Karinska.

The repertoire will of course include the classic favourites—Gaiete Parisienne, Le Beau Danube, Caproccio Espanol, Scheherazade, Casse Noisette, Les Sylphides and Lac des Cygnes.

ENTHUSIASM

The booking of the tour in America has met with most exceptional enthusiasm that surprised even the trade journal, Variety. Between October 1st and the end of April, 179 dates have been lined up for the company, and of these 70 have been guaranteed for $250,000 and the remaining 109 are expected to bring in something over $300,000. The company consists of only 78 persons, including musicians and stage crew, is a highly competent unit, and despite the length of its tour will sleep in beds every night.

The company is managed and has been booked by Frederick C. Schang, President of Columbia Artists Management Inc., who booked the company before the last World War, and who kept a small concert troupe version of the Ballet Russe out on tour during the last two years in order to keep the name alive.

BALLET DIGEST

ALEX PAAL will film *Dance in the Sun* in Germany . . . . . **Jeanmaire** is to co-star with **Bing Crosby** in *Anything Goes* (the Broadway hit) for Paramount . . . . she is also to debut at the Paris Opera in *La Belle Helene* . . . . . **Jack Hylton's** *Wonderful Town* will premiere at Manchester Opera House for Christmas, enter London in the new year . . . . **Miss Cinerama** was a dancer . . . . **Josephine Baker** is to film in Germany with the **Woodie Herman** Orchestra . . . . . Ballet schools have shot up all over Argentina—for no apparent reason . . . . **Isadora Duncan's** prophesy that the **Wagner** festival at Bayreuth would one day accept her diminutive ideas of dress came true this year as the opera ballet was attacked for its "completely naked-looking" costumes.

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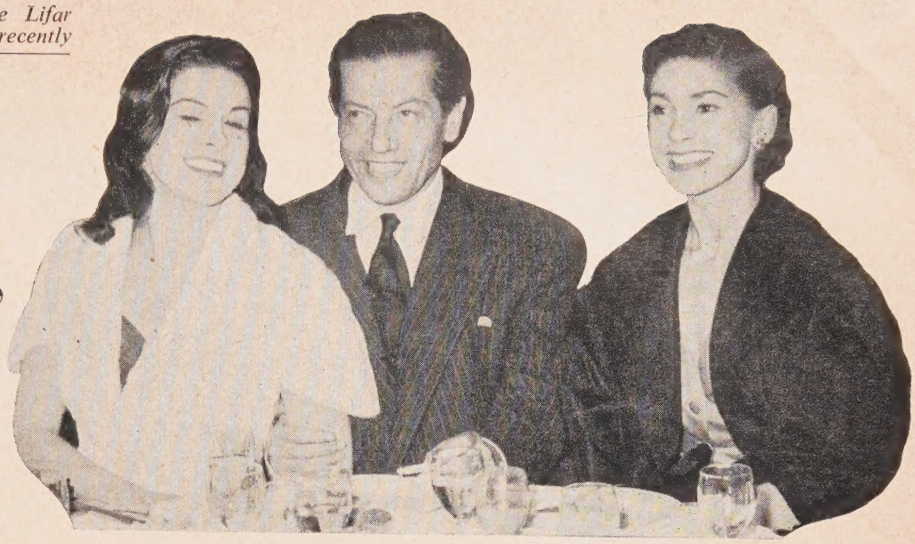
Violetta Elvin, Serge Lifar with Margot Fonteyn recently



Karsavina on The Firebird – and "New Worlds" for Fonteyn

Ballet as I see it

by Fernau Hall

FOR me the recent revival of The Firebird *by the Sadler's Wells Ballet was an overwhelming experience—the sort of artistic experience that comes only once or twice in a decade.*

Here was something which could challenge comparison with the finest achievements in other arts : almost every detail of choreography, casting, music, decor, costumes and lighting was right ; and Margot Fonteyn's performance as The Firebird—in other words all the dancing that matters in the ballet—went far beyond anything I had dared to hope. If my standards are stratospheric, then this performance could only be described as interstellar.

Though I was born too late to see Karsavina in this role, I did see a good many performances between the wars by talented Russians who won high praise from critics ; but none of these could be compared with Fonteyn's. Not only did she far surpass them in achieving such classical virtues as beauty of line, clarity of phrasing and so on : she brought out clearly hundreds of details of choreography which before were either blurred on non-existent, and made the character of the Firebird build up through many changes of mood until it attained the shattering and magical inevitability of the greatest art.

Since I knew that Margot Fonteyn had been produced by Karsavina—who created the role, and has an amazingly accurate memory for every nuance of line, feeling and timing in her own roles—I felt safe in taking Margot Fonteyn's performance to be an almost miraculous re-incarnation of Fokine's original conception.

I was accordingly dumbfounded to find that Cyril Beaumont—who saw the original production with Karsavina some forty years ago—had no praise for any aspect of Margot Fonteyn's performance. Writing in *The Sunday Times*, he stated that she was wrong in dancing brilliantly instead of employing Fokine's "simpler, tender manner" ; he doubted if the original arm movements were "so writhing" she failed to make the scene of the Firebird's capture by Ivan poignant ; her make-up was too exotic ; and even her gesture in handing over the feather was "negligent".

I have very great respect for Cyril Beaumont. As a ballet historian he is in a class by himself : the dozens of scholarly books which have issued from Charing Cross Road in the past forty years form the basis of every ballet library : and he has made a contribution of incalculable importance to classical dancing by founding and directing the Cecchetti Society.

Nevertheless I felt when I read his account of *The Firebird* that he was mistaken in thinking that Margot Fonteyn had departed from Fokine's original conception ; for this is the last thing one would expect from a dancer with such humility and artistic integrity. (Unlike some other famous dancers, she has always sought to bring out what the choreographer intended.)

In order to clarify this matter I decided to interview Karsavina—the one person who can talk with complete authority about it.

I began by asking her if I was right in supposing that she had restored the original choreography ; and this is what she told me :—

"The choreography of this role changed a good deal as it passed from one dancer to another ; often, when the choreographer is no longer there, dancers alter the steps to suit themselves, or else the details are forgotten. When I started rehearsals with Margot Fonteyn I could not remember all the choreography straight away ; but the music made things come back, and I kept thinking about it. Eventually I remembered the whole of the role exactly as it was when Fokine created the original version for me in 1910. It was this version which I taught Margot Fonteyn. She is a very sincere artist, and keeps completely to what Fokine arranged."

"*Would you say her interpretation is too brilliant and exotic—not tender and simple enough* ?"

"Not at all. The part is *very* exotic. It is a highly dramatic role. The Firebird is a kind of bird of prey, ferocious and of great power. There are some lyrical aspects which emerge in the Berceuse ; but for the most part it is a powerful role, and must be dramatised. You must bear in mind that the whole ballet is based on Russian fairy-tales, and Russian folk-lore was much influenced by the East—particularly Persia and India. The Firebird is one of a number of such birds in Russian folk-lore which can clearly be traced back to the East, and it is essential that it should be interpreted in a very exotic manner."

"*What did you think of Margot Fonteyn's make-up* ? *Was it too exotic* ?"

"In fact I did suggest it ; and when I saw it at rehearsal I said 'How marvellous !' It was absolutely right."

"*Your own make-up was also very exotic, wasn't it* ?"

"Yes, indeed."

"*Did Margot Fonteyn have much difficulty in assimilating the part* ?"

"When she started to learn it she suffered agonies ; for it was very different from any previous part she had tackled. But she mastered it in the most remarkable way, and came to feel it strongly for herself. She is a very wonderful artist ; this role gives her great scope, and now I believe she is very happy dancing in it. It is a fine thing that she has been given the chance of interpreting this role, for it opens out to her a whole new aspect of ballet."

The success of this revival of *The Firebird* as a whole is of the highest importance—the artistic policies of every ballet company in the world (not least the Sadlers Wells Ballet) must take account of it—and Karsavina raised a point of equal importance when she mentioned that in this work Margot Fonteyn discovered a whole new aspect of ballet.

For this role came at a time when rumours had begun to circulate about her retirement. She is not a person to pay any attention to rumours, and they have in any case been firmly denied by the Covent Garden authorities.

On the other hand she has stated that she will retire when she feels that her dancing is beginning to decline. The greatest stimulus any artist can receive is the chance to conquer a new world : and since the prosperity of the Sadlers Wells Ballet depends heavily on Margot Fonteyn, its artistic directors would be well advised to offer her a series of new worlds to conquer.

Among those worlds which might appeal to her, I suggest the Dauberval world (*La Fille Mal Gardee*), the Bournonville world (*La Sylphide*), and the Tudor world (*Pillar of Fire*).

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Ballet . . . from the Wings

A ballet photographer writes about that frequent worry—the ballet photograph

by MIKE DAVIS, A.R.P.S.

IS BALLET adequately served with photographs ? The answer depends on the kind of photographs one means. There are undoubtedly a plethora of bad ones, as undeniably there is a scarcity of good ballet pictures.

English ballet has reached a high standard and if it is to maintain such a standard it will only be with the support of the general public. Its public relations cannot be better served than by the display of photographs that are not only of credit to ballet, but also to its artists.

By public I do not necessarily mean the converted or the regular ballet audiences, but the general public, many of whom have never attended a ballet performance. Most photographers will admit that pictorially, ballet has few if any equals.

The scenes, settings, the costumes, the romantic grace, the rhythmic balance, and a host of factors go to making perfect pictorial subjects. Why then are there so few pictures of merit and distinction to warrant the opportunity it provides ?

BLAME

In the main, I think that the attitude of the companies themselves is to blame. It has almost become an artistic affectation to treat the photography of ballet as a bore, and they appear to forget that the object of themselves and the photographer is, and should be, on the same side of the fence, and if first-rate pictures are to be obtained, first-rate facilities must be given.

Sometimes when one has obtained permission to photograph a distinguished artist, the photographer finds himself on the stage before the performance, with the instructions that he has a few minutes before the rise of the curtain. In taking the pictures the photographer knows that the fame of this subject will, in all probability, ensure the acceptance of the photographs by the general press, irrespective of their merit or quality.

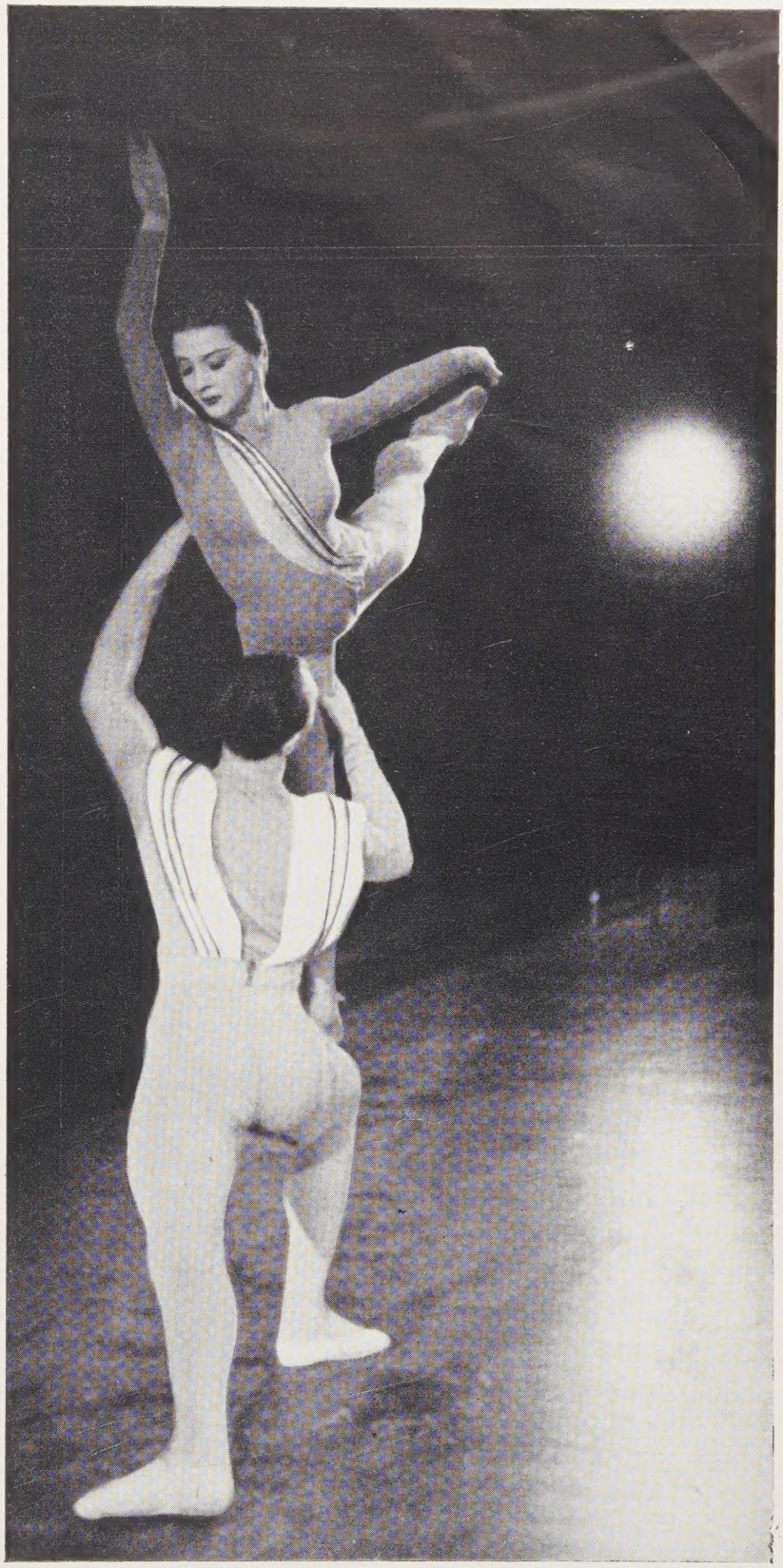
FAIR ?

Is this fair to the subject in question ? Indeed is it fair to ballet in general ? Surely only an intellectual Sahara can labour under the impression that full justice could be done to the principal concerned, and that harsh flash lighting could show to advantage the delicate moulding of features, or fixed stage lighting could give the softer half-tones so necessary to portray the essence of most pictures.

Some ballerinas, who have been rendered camera-shy by past unfortunate experiences, avoid (whenever possible) being photographed. By such an unintelligent approach to the problem, not only do they do themselves a disservice, but to ballet as a whole to which they owe so much, for it is to the popularity of the stars that we must look for the conversion of the large, potential audiences.

HAPPILY

To walk with kings, ballet must not lose the common touch. To many it is an inbred thing to be enjoyed by the select few. Happily this unhealthy view is shared by the minority, but wider audiences will only be gained by the right kind of publicity. For, in the main, ballet is getting photographs it does not deserve, and it must make a very real effort to do justice to itself and its public.



This photograph is of Marie Fris—see also page ten

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